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Dan Seph

SUBMISSION

OF

THE FEDERATION OF ALBERTA METIS SETTLEMENT

ASSOCIATIONS

TO

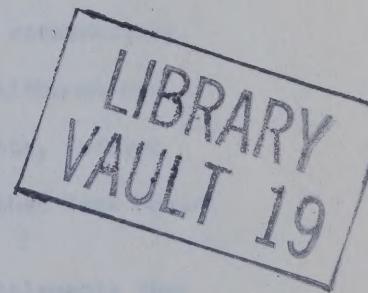
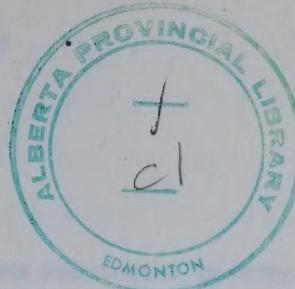
THE HONOURABLE PREMIER LOUGHEED

AND

MINISTERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE

PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

DECEMBER 11, 1972



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TO THE HONORABLE PREMIER LOUGHEED AND MINISTERS
OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

INTRODUCTION

For the past two and a half years, the Provincial governments "Metis Task Force" under the capable leadership of its Chairman, Mr. Tom Roach, has addressed itself to an examination of the needs of the Metis population within the Province of Alberta in general and the needs of the Metis settlements in particular. The purpose of this examination was primarily directed towards an attempted definition and the recommendation of a Metis development policy to the Alberta Provincial cabinet.

The recommendations of the Metis Task Force contained in its interim report of December 4, 1970, were made known to the Metis people of the settlements through the efforts of the Federation's executive comprising Mr. Richard Poitras, Mr. Sam Johnson and Mr. Adrian Hope, President, 1st Vice-President and 2nd Vice-President respectively. These recommendations of the Provincial Metis Task Force, although not collectively agreed to by the Metis people of the settlements, reflect the high degree of quality and fore-thought of members of that Task Force.

It became apparent to the Metis people of the settlements that there was required at this time a need to establish definite lines of communication with the government of the Province of Alberta in order

to generate an input into those decisions and policies which would have a direct impact and effect on their lives. This need pre-dated and did in fact give rise to the birth of the Federation of Alberta Metis Settlement Associations. The acceptance of this new direction of an affected segment of the Metis population has been demonstrated by the new Provincial government through funding meetings by both the former Human Resources Development Authority and the Metis Rehabilitation Branch, and more recently, the granting of an operational budget for the Federation.

HISTORICAL

On February 27, 1933, the legislature of the Province of Alberta passed a resolution to initiate an enquiry into the conditions surrounding the half-breed population of the Province of Alberta, with particular emphasis on those areas relating to health, education, relief and general welfare. To this end, there was established a commission on the 12th December, 1934, to which were appointed as Commissioners, the Honorable Judge A. F. Ewing, a Judge of the Supreme Court of Alberta, as Chairman, Dr. E. A. Braithwaite, Commission member, and Mr. J. M. Douglas, citizen of Edmonton, Commission member.

The establishment of this Commission was as a direct result of a hearing with members of the first organized Metis Association in the Province of Alberta. This Association was then known as "L'Association

Des Metis d'Alberta et Les Territoires du Nord-Quest". The first President was Mr. J. F. Dion, a Metis teacher from the Frog Lake Indian reserve; 1st Vice President Mr. M.F. Norris of Edmonton; 2nd Vice President, Mr. Felix Calahoo of St. Paul; 3rd Vice President, Mr. Henry Cunningham of St. Albert; and Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. J.P. Brady of St. Paul. The date of inception of this first Metis organization was 1932.

As a result of a Royal Commission report hearing in February 28, 1935 with this Metis organization, there was established eight Metis colonies as follows:

Utikuma (Gift) Lake #3E by O.C. 1602/38 on Dec. 21, 1938
Beaver River #7 (Kikino and Caslan) by O.C. 370/39 on Mar., 1939
Keg River #1 by O.C. 547/39 on May 9, 1939
Elizabeth #10N by O.C. 815/39 on June 22, 1939
East Prairie #4 by O.C. 928/39 on July 15, 1939
Big Prairie #3W by O.C. 1100/39 on August 21, 1939
Fishing Lake #10S by O.C. 697/40 on May 22, 1940

Other areas suggested for establishment of other colonies but which were never considered were Lac La Biche, Conklin, Fort Chipewyan and Marlboro. The reasons for not considering these areas were never quite clear. The findings and recommendations of the Ewing Commission.

were largely incorporated in enacting legislation by the government of the Province of Alberta in the creation of the Metis Betterment Act which has undergone very few revisions to date. At present, the regulations arising from the Act contain a number of conflicting points as for example: Prior to 1958, the various colonies were managed by a Board of 5 Directors, 3 of whom were elected by the Metis people, two of whom were selected by the Metis Branch. Of the two so selected, one was the government appointed colony Supervisor who was always Chairman of the Board and the other was a Metis. After 1958, this system was changed whereby the managing Board now comprised three members, a Chairman and two Counsellors, all duly elected by the Metis people. The Act and regulations have never been revised to accommodate this change in systems. There are other inconsistencies. The main point to be made here is that the consultative process regarding changes in the Act and regulations has been maintained with the Metis people.

Thirty years and more have passed since the establishment of these colonies. During this time Alberta and its people have progressed and prospered. The Metis people have endured and continue to suffer deprivations and gross deficiencies. The hope of the Metis people within their settlements lie in the opportunity to conduct themselves to meaningful dialogue with the new government of the Province of Alberta through their Federation of Settlement Associations in the same manner and cordial atmosphere as that which prevailed when the "L'Association

des Metis d'Alberta et les Territoires du Nord-Quest" sat down with the Alberta government of 1933.

The Metis people of the colonies recognize the need to join efforts, resources, knowledge, expertise, desire and willingness towards the development and attainment of those goals of the settlement communities and to this end make the following requests and recommendations to the Honourable Ministers and the Government of the Province of Alberta. These needs and requirements are necessary to the Federation and the colonies in order to facilitate those socio-economic developmental processes through which Metis people may attain those goals to which the government of the Province of Alberta subscribes - self-sufficiency through self-determination.

It is now a year and a month ago since we first presented to this new government, our first brief as a Federation. At that time we had indicated to you that it was our hope that the Federation would phase out within three years time as government inputs increased and through these services, we would gain the necessary sophistication to conduct our own business and to reach the first stages of self-sufficiency. We have two years more to go and it is our sincere desire, with your assistance, to still reach our goals.

The following ten points were contained in our brief of November 15, 1971:

Requests and Recommendations and the Federation of Settlement Associations

1. Negotiation of budgetary and facilities requirements for the Federation in order to conduct its business. Budgetary requirements to include salaries and operational expenses for two full time executive officers initially, one secretary and consultative fees. Facilities to be negotiated with the Metis Rehabilitation Branch and preferably located integrally within the Branch office. Operational expenses to cover travel of officers and travel and fixed per diem for Board members of both the Federation and colonies as required.
2. Formation of a joint committee of the Federation and government representatives to sit as a revision committee on the Act and its regulations.
3. The joint committee to assess and evaluate the present structure of the Metis Branch and submit recommendations for its improvement and functions.
4. Establishment of a Metis Settlement Advisory Board to the Minister or Ministers charged with the responsibility of colonies.
5. Transfer of jurisdictional powers to colonies and Metis people in respect to self-government. The inference here would not be unlike those powers as held by a Mayor and Council in any other community.
6. The addition of those experts to the actual staff of the Metis Branch necessary in assisting the colonies and people in establishing economic development, both industrially and agriculturally.

7. The right of colony leadership in proposing and developing annual budgets and the appropriation and allocation of funds in concert with officers of the Metis Branch.
8. The establishment of an economic development and loan fund for Metis settlements with active participation of Metis members on the Committee administering this fund.
9. Entitlement of the colonies to reaffirmation and clarification of that regulation, specifically Alberta regulation 112/60 by Order in Council 466/60 as it relates to the administration of the funds of the Metis Settlement Associations. It is the intention of the Federation to pursue this matter through the proper channels to the high court level if necessary in order to obtain redress, at the very least to obtain a legal opinion.
10. More direct involvement of the Metis people of colonies in the determination of policies relating to health and welfare, education, housing, recreation and community and economic development as they apply to the settlements.

In this short year just passed, the Federation has made much headway, particularly in bridging the gaps of communication, and raising to the surface the priority concerns of our settlement Associations. It would appear that little else was accomplished in terms of our first

presentation, but this feeling is tempered by the knowledge that both you, as a new government, and we, as a new Federation, must find the directions by which we together, can resolve our many issues and concerns.

In order to provide a basis for discussions towards establishment of a framework within which we can start the immediate task of developing approaches and programs to meet our objectives, we would request the constituting of a joint Provincial-Federation Committee to meet at regularly appointed times, and on a continuing basis, to examine the following priority items:

- (1) Resolution of the Trust Account funds, through the Constitutional Act, by the Supreme Court of Alberta.
- (2) Amendments to the Metis Betterment Act and its regulations and consideration of both task forces reports - Provincial and Metis.
- (3) Housing and water supply - community halls.
- (4) Community development program and community services.
- (5) Health, education and facilities, recreation and social services.
- (6) A framework for economic development.
 - (a) Agriculture and livestock.

- (b) Forestry operations - lumbering and sawmills.
- (c) Small business development.
- (d) Commercial recreational development.

(7) Development of local self-government and the right of settlement elected officials in the participation and determination of budgets and appropriations and responsibility to administer fiscal budgets.

(8) Government programs and their determination.

- (a) Newstart successor and A.V.C.'s.
- (b) Local settlement training and upgrading programs.
- (c) Road programs.

(9) Negotiation of a new Native incentive program through D.R.E.E. by both the Province of Alberta and the Federal government. We feel that this is absolutely necessary for the only route open to us is the co-op route, and 99% of our individual projects do not fit that or any other provincial program.

(10) An examination of the future role of the Metis Rehabilitation Branch and its location within a Ministry which will afford development of the settlements and their peoples rather than its present custodial role.

(11) The establishment of a revolving loan fund or credit union for the settlements. This will provide us the opportunity for equity in order to take advantage of grants through a Native Federal/Provincial incentive agreement.

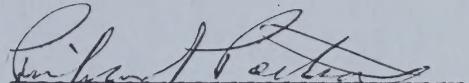
(12) A reconsideration of the points submitted to the government in November of 1971 and which are not duplicated in the foregoing,

We, the Federation of Alberta Metis Settlement Associations, wish to take this opportunity to thank the Honourable Premier Lougheed and his Ministers for receiving this brief and for meeting with us today. It is our hope that you will all hear us and will give us some answers in order that we may take word back to the people we represent.

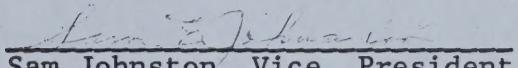
It is the desire and intention of the Metis Settlements of the Province of Alberta, through the efforts of their Federation, to create an atmosphere of joint effort directed towards the advancement of their peoples and the creation of those social and economic opportunities which will afford the Metis people the opportunity in attaining their goals.

Respectfully submitted to the Honourable Premier
Lougheed and the Ministers of the government of the Province
of Alberta.

THE FEDERATION OF ALBERTA METIS SETTLEMENT ASSOCS.



Richard Poitras
Richard Poitras, President



Sam Johnston
Sam Johnston, Vice President

